ISLAM-

A Brief Introduction

In order to understand Islam, it is necessary to know the **meaning of certain key terms and the identity of some proper names. Most of them are in the Arabic language, and often, there is no equivalent in English.**

1. Allah

The Arabic word for God, the one and only God. Allah is the same God worshipped by Jews and Christians.

2. Islam

Islam means submission; that is submission to God

3.Muhammed-

the prohpet or apostle of God. His role in conveying the word of God was similar to that of Moses or Jesus.

4. Mecca-

town where Mohammad was born and raised. A Holy city to Muslims.



Muslim-

- A believer in Islam.
- Literally translates to “one who submits to God”.



The Quran

- Koran
- Qur’an
- Holy scripture (word) of Islam
- Revealed by God to Muhammad

Sunni Muslim

- Orthodox or mainstream body of Muslims
- Majority of Muslims are Sunni

Shi'ite (Shiah) Muslims

- Minority division (about 10-15%)
- Sometimes thought to be more radical than Sunni Muslims

Hajj-

- Pilgrimage (especially the pilgrimage to Mecca)
- One of the Five Pillars of Islam

Mosque-

- Place of worship



Jihad-

- Means struggle or fight
- Sometimes translated as “Holy War”
- Used in reference to wars fought by Muslims against those thought to be enemies of Islam

Ramadan

- Takes place in the 9th month of the Islamic year
- Muslims are required to fast from dawn until sunset during the month of Ramadan
- Fasting is called Sawm (another of the Five Pillars of Islam

- **The Five Pillars of Islam**
- -All Muslims are required perform the five pillars if they are able (mentally and physically)

1. Shahada-The profession of faith

"There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet."

-This is recited several times a day during the daily prayers

2. Salat-daily prayers

- These prayers are said five times each day (once in the morning, three times during the day and once at night) while facing in the direction of Mecca (the holy city located in Saudi Arabia).

3. Zakat-giving alms to the needy.

- This is considered a religious obligation and an expression of devotion to Allah.
- The Qur'an strongly encourages charity.

4. Sawm-fasting

- Usually done during the 9 month of the Islamic calendar during the month called Ramadan.
- For the entire month, Muslims must fast from daybreak to sunset by refraining from eating, drinking, or sexual activity.

5. Hajj-Pilgrimage to Mecca

- Muslims who have the physical and financial ability should perform the hajj at least once in a lifetime.